

## **Week of March 31, 2003: MaineDOT Flash Facts**

### **Topic: Rear-end Collisions**

#### **Some Statistics on Maine Rear End Collisions**

##### **In Maine, from 1999 to 2001:**

- The most common type of crash was Rear End. (One out of three crashes is a Rear End type.) There were more than 38,000 rear end crashes resulting in 23 fatalities and over 16,000 injuries.
- Almost 24,000 drivers were in Rear End crashes because they were distracted while driving.
- Over 9,000 drivers were involved in Rear End crashes due to following the vehicle ahead too closely.
- Other factors that lead to Rear End crashes are unsafe speed and improper passing.
- Nearly 10,000 Rear End crashes occur when roads are slick (wet, snowy or icy).
- Rear end crashes happen at the following road locations:
  - Straight road sections – 16,000 (41%)
  - Intersections – 15,000 (40%)
  - Driveways – 4,400 (11.5%)
  - Ramps/Interchanges – 1,100 (3%)
- Rear end collisions have an estimated economic impact of \$250 million a year.

##### **Monday:**

##### **Opener:**

The MaineDOT wants you to know that the most common kind of vehicle crash is also the most preventable. More after the break.

##### **Flash Facts:**

The most common kind of car crash in Maine is the rear-end collision. Almost one-third of all crashes fall into this category, according to the MaineDOT. Rear-enders can be prevented. Here's what you can do:

- When Driving-Just Drive! Don't change the radio or talk on the cell phone - keep your eyes on the road.
- Don't tailgate. Keep sufficient space between you and the car in front. Think of it as a safety barrier-because it is!
- Maintain a 4 to 5 second gap between you and the vehicle ahead in poor road conditions.
- Keep headrests at about the middle of the back of your head to minimize injury.

Be A Road Model - don't be responsible for causing a rear-end collision.

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## **Wednesday:**

### **Opener:**

One of the most common types of car crashes is on the rise in Maine. Find out more after the break.

### **Flash Facts:**

Which type of vehicle crash is most common? According to the MaineDOT, the answer is rear-end collisions. The DOT also says these crashes are on the increase - up nearly 40% in the last 10 years.

- Most rear-end collisions took place when one of the involved drivers was stopping or slowing in traffic.
- As many rear end crashes happen on straight stretches of road as at intersections. Watch ahead for traffic slowdowns at work zones and driveways.
- When stopped, keep your wheels straight to prevent being pushed into oncoming traffic in the event you are rear-ended.
- Keep an eye on your mirrors when stopped and leave an escape route.

Be A Road Model - Watch the car in front of you and traffic conditions further ahead, as well as behind you.

## **Friday:**

### **Opener:**

Sometimes your car can feel too much like a home. More after the break

### **Flash Facts:**

These days, your car or truck is likely to carry many of the conveniences of home. Music. Comfortable seating. Good food. Hot drinks. A telephone. According to the MaineDOT, this could be contributing to a rise in the number of rear-end collisions. Why? Because these totally preventable crashes are often caused by driver distraction. Here's what you can do.

- When you're driving, just drive. Don't allow that jelly doughnut or cell phone to distract you.
- Keep a safe distance between you and the car in front. It's a safety zone for you.
- Watch road and traffic conditions well ahead and adjust your speed accordingly.
- Clearly show other drivers your intentions – brake slowly and always use your turn signal.

Be A Road Model. Don't cause a rear-end collision.